THIS BOOK WILL GET YOU HIRED!

SAMPLE BOOK

NOT FOR SALE

Francois Philippe Fontaine

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Chapter 1
Does This Happen to You?

Your bills are mounting up. Your salary barely covers your expenses or – worse – you're one of the unfortunate ones without a job! You're dipping into your savings – even edging into debt. You're waking up every morning with a knot in your stomach, reluctant to tell your loved ones just how precarious things have become. A new position appears in your feed. Hurray! You decide to apply. It's not your dream job, but the pay's attractive, and surely anything's better than this gnawing fear.

Application

You make sure you do everything right. You sculpt your resume like Michelangelo creating a work of art. Perhaps you even hire a professional to do it for you. You've read your cover letter a million times over to correct the tiniest errors. Everything's perfect! You send it off and wait excitedly. Your wait turns out to be days, which turn into weeks and then into months. No response from them! You follow up by phone and e-mail. Still, no reply! At best, you get a canned response like "That person's not here right now" or "We're looking into it." This happens over and over again till you lose hope that you will ever escape this exhausting grind.

Interviews

Finally, your resume got shortlisted! You're called in for an interview. You put on your best suit, wear your brightest smile and walk in with your head held high. The questions they ask are boilerplate, such as "Tell me about yourself" and "Why are you leaving your current job?" You answer them the best you can, hoping that the interviewer's convinced. The truth is you're under so much pressure that you can't tell if you're winning or losing. You cross your fingers and hope for the best.

Round after round of interviews means, surely, you must be on the right track... right? In one session, you have a great conversation with the interviewer. They seem so nice. You leave feeling elated. Perhaps, this is the one. They said they'll get back to you soon and you dare to believe it's true.

Again, days turn into weeks and weeks into months. It's happening again! With almost every interview, you've heard nothing back. Now your morale is lost.

You seem to wonder what you did wrong. You beat yourself up: "How can I not be good enough, after putting in all this effort?" You replay your words and actions; blame yourself for every tiny mistake. You do nothing but wonder what made you miss the mark.

"Why Didn't I Get the Job?"

If all your experience and qualifications align perfectly with the role, why didn't you get the callback? This is a common problem. This would probably be the #1 pet peeve of every job seeker.

Oftentimes, the problem is not you. There are various factors at play in the background that most job seekers find hard to fathom.

For starters, recruiters are under mammoth pressure from top management and company policy. Expectations and bureaucracy often make them inefficient. That HR team that rejected your application last week probably knows you are well qualified! However, their bosses have a narrow vision of what they want. If your application deviates from that narrow vision by so much as half an inch, hirers are under massive pressure to reject you or else face a grilling from their superiors.

I want you to imagine your friend is interviewing for the same position as you. You know for a fact that he/she is terrible at this type of job. They have scant experience and hardly any chance of winning. You both leave the building at the same time. Turns out, they walk out clutching a job offer! Bam, you just entered the Twilight Zone!

Sadly, this sort of thing happens all the time. Recruiters can be terrible judges of both character and aptitude. The fact is, beyond taking a resume on faith, most

organizations lack any means of measuring how qualified a candidate really is. As a result – I hate to say it, but – those willing to exaggerate their credentials often do better.

So How Do We Win?

It is unfortunate that we are in this situation right now, and as job seekers, we have no control over it. The best thing to do is to try and work around this mess. We need to stay in this messy system and still get what we want.

In every recruitment scenario, there are countless factors at play, under the surface, which is difficult to understand at first glance. The real key to winning is to understand every facet of the hiring process *from the employer's perspective*.

Up till now, your mind is probably fully prepared for the role of an employee, but once you read this book, all that changes. From now on, as you prepare for interviews, you'll be thinking from the point of view of an HR recruiter of your target company.

Your superpower is empathy.

Ask yourself, what would you have done if you were in charge of recruiting? Just like us, recruiters are human beings too. Every recruiter and every company is different. What they're seeking is sometimes not consistent, sometimes not even logical: it doesn't matter. Our job is to deeply understand the person and the situation we're

dealing with. We'll look past what they *say* they want and discover what they are really looking for.

Remember we talked about a company's narrow vision? Going forward, we're going to show off your best qualities *only within that narrow vision* of what the company truly seeks. We'll prepare custom answers to all the common interview questions, keeping that company ideal firmly in mind.

And by the time you're done with this book, you'll no longer have to ask yourself, "Why didn't I get the call?" You'll understand – and you'll have a new method of preparation that puts you miles ahead of the competition.

Let's begin.

Chapter 2
The Typical Mindset of an Interviewer/Recruiter

When we apply for a job, we always like to think that the recruiters give our application its fair attention. We imagine them scanning our whole resume from top to bottom, reading every word exactly how it's intended. We might even hope that they value our humble achievements and overlook the flaws.

All this is possible in a unicorn-filled, rainbows-and-sunshine kind of world. In reality, your application is only as good as the mood of the hirer that day! On a day they feel good, they may give your application its due consideration. This is the best-case scenario. Even so, if they found the right candidate before they got to your application, the rest of the pile, including yours, goes to trash.

Sounds harsh now, doesn't it? But, there's more. Many companies have assigned this application filtering work to software bots called Applicant Tracking System. In theory, this system is supposed to look for keywords that relate to the job requirements. That's the party line, anyways. In reality, these systems are programmed to reject as many

SEVERAL PAGES IN BETWEEN
NOT SHOWN IN SAMPLE

had to wait around for months before he received his first offer. His job search process on the whole was nothing short of backbreaking.

A and B from this story were polar opposites in many ways. Each was good at one thing and lacking in the other. We all would've seen several A's and B's in our lives and formed our own impressions. In fact, we have some amount of A and some amount of B inside of us. The percentages might differ though.

There are many lessons to be learned from this story. If I have to summarize the story of A and B in one word, I'd say "advertising". A knew how to effectively advertise himself or sell himself, while B didn't.

Advertising – Painting the Fanciful Picture

A job interview is much the same as a TV ad. The difference is that the product is you (as an employee) and you have to do it by yourself in person.

In the movie *North by Northwest*, Cary Grant's character says "In the world of advertising, there's no such thing as a lie. There's only expedient exaggeration." This is quite true for job interviews also. The one who lands the job is not the one most adept at doing the job but the best salesman. Of course, used car salesmen make excellent interview candidates!

When was the last time you got enamored by a TV ad? Chances are that the ad had some form of exaggeration going on. Say, you would've seen male deodorant ads where women blindly follow a man just because he wore that brand of deodorant. This is an exaggeration, quite improbable in real life.

Another great example is tortilla chips commercials. They often feature unbelievable situations such as grandmas becoming action heroes, unborn baby reacting to dad eating chips and what not! While being obviously illogical, these ads turned many heads.

Weight loss ads often show unrealistic "before" and "after" photos to overstate the amount of weight you can reduce. Skin care products almost always promise to make you 10 years younger. Cleaning products always promise to make your house squeaky clean without even scrubbing. Every toothpaste ad promises to make your teeth sparkling white. The list goes on.

What do all of these ads have in common? Is there any pattern you can notice here? For one, none of these ads aim to be logical. Everyone knows none of these promises are going to happen in real life. The outcomes shown are so extremely exaggerated that you're often left confused. What's more, some of these ads show outcomes nobody wants in real life. For instance, some car commercials

show flying cars but nobody expects their car to fly in real life (at least not yet).

The only motive of these ads is to grab your attention, and grab your attention they did. Once they grab your attention, you remember the ad. Thanks to that, you remember the brand. You remember the brand, you ask for it at the store – Lo and behold, they make the sale. Do you see the point here?

Such ads may seem ridiculous at first, but they work! Ads that exaggerate the result make a stronger and more memorable impression that people want to try that product at once. While a flying car isn't real yet, car owners love to imagine as if they're flying. It's not the product itself but the idea that people fall in love with. Exaggeration is an age-old, time-tested formula that just works.

Intentionally or not, many candidates have applied this formula to their job search and found success. It's surprising how many interviewers buy into their exaggerated claims. While some interviewers may willingly believe such claims, many of them have no option but to decide based on these claims. As we saw before, managers need to justify their hiring decisions to their bosses. A candidate with attractive qualities in their profile (even if exaggerated) and a strong claim of high performance (even if exaggerated) is an easier justification compared to a candidate without these things. It's no

longer a test of how capable a candidate truly is but a measure of how capable the candidate confidently *claims* to be.

Of course, there are always some sharp-witted hirers who won't buy into this. But, such hirers are rare! In the vast majority of cases, hirers give more attention to the exaggerating applicant.

Exaggeration vs. Lying

At this point, you may have several questions.

- Exaggeration is wrong, isn't it?
- Isn't it unethical to make false claims?
- Isn't exaggeration the same as lying on my resume?
- What if my employer finds out later on?
- Could I land into trouble?
- How do I answer any embarrassing questions when they find out?

These are fair questions. First up, exaggeration is not the same as lying.

A lie is something you can't justify, but exaggeration is something you can! In other words, you have to take some positive you already have and blow it up out of proportion (exactly like TV ads). Such exaggeration is necessary to grab the recruiter's attention. Explain your positives in several alluring words and phrases that would be music to

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Chapter 5
50+ Interview Questions Answered

This chapter is the meat of this book. Answering interview questions is the core of giving job interviews. This is such a basic skill that every interviewee has to get right. Fortunately, here is a list of the most common interview questions with best or example answers along with additional info.

Question 1

Tell me about yourself.

Alternative Wording (Variants):

Introduce yourself.
Take me through your resume.
Give me a rundown/summary of your resume.
What is your past work experience like?

Why They Ask This Question

If you ask me, there are umpteen other better ways to start an interview. However, many interviewers don't have time to think of a better opening and, thus, resort to this boring question just because it's easier. This question is so open-ended that many candidates are confused about where to begin. Many often feel the pressure right at the start of an interview.

Whenever you hear this question, understand it as "what benefit do you bring to the company?" This benefit is also called "value". Always talk about how much you have understood the role in question and in what way you meet the requirements. Interviewers want to know exactly this and simply love candidates that directly answer this.

Ideal Answer

I am a [insert profession here]. I have experience working as a [position] for [number] of years. As you can see from my resume, I majored in [related education specialization] and I have worked for organizations like [company name], [company name] and [company name] as a [related position(s)].

I am very good at [task 1], [task 2] and [task 3]. In my experience, I have handled such tasks on a daily/frequent basis including challenges/additional requirements such as [challenge 1], [challenge 2] and [challenge 3]. From your ad, I understand you want your candidate to be/have [requirement 1], [requirement 2] and [requirement 3]. As you can see, my qualifications and experience match perfectly with these requirements. This is what brings me here today.

How to Say It

Practice saying this in front of a mirror (for a few days) to the point that you sound natural, confident and without stutter. Smile slightly as you say it (don't beam). Very

importantly, keep this whole explanation to within one minute. Mention everything in a matter-of-fact tone rather than as a memorized announcement.

Only include qualifications and experience relevant to that job in particular. Modify the given script as you need. In case you seek a career change, mention at least one or two transferable skills from your current line of work, one pertinent educational qualification, one certified private course you attended in the new field, one internship or one volunteering activity related to the new line of work during the interview.

Why This Answer Works

This question is often intended to eliminate candidates. Recruiters are not going to like candidates who are unprepared for this question and fumble. It's quite possible that a recruiter might reject you solely based on this question. If you don't make sense in the first few sentences for this question, you might be out.

Interviewers typically look for answers to whether you're serious about this job, if you have given enough thought about the requirements and challenges as well as how you've planned to carry out your daily responsibilities.

This answer works because it not only details what is on your resume, which is the direct answer to the question, but also tells how it connects with the job requirements

posted by the employer themselves, which is the true intended question.

Question 2

Why should we hire you?

Alternative Wording (Variants):

What makes you unique?
What can you do for us that some else can't?
Why are you the best candidate?
What will you contribute to the company?
What do you bring to the table?
In what way will you be an asset to the company?
Why would you be a good fit for this position?
How productive will you be at your work?

Why They Ask This Question

The actual question is "Why should we hire you in particular over everybody else who's competing for the same position?" The interviewer's job is precisely to figure this part out. It doesn't feel very good when they ask this to us so directly, but look at the flipside – this is a great opportunity to advertise all your strengths.

You best think beforehand about what makes you truly unique for that position. If you think hard, there should be at least one quality that you have that's quantifiably better than others. Quantifiable is the keyword here. If you still couldn't think of anything, just mention each job requirement and how you'll fulfill it. Make sure the answer is not a repetition of the answer to "Tell me about yourself".

Ideal Answer

I am glad you asked. You had said in your ad that you want someone with [number] years of experience, right? I have [greater number]. You said you want an undergraduate degree holder in this field, right? I am a post grad. Furthermore, I have made X, Y, Z achievements in my previous organizations. I have received awards/promotions/client appreciation e-mails purely for my quality of work and commitment to the role (briefly elaborate on one or two of the achievements). All in all, I am sure I could bring immense value to this organization.

(Make sure you bring the printed copy of the client appreciation e-mails and photos of receiving the awards, if applicable. This will boost your impression by a million times.)

How to Say It

Make sure your tone doesn't sound like bragging but still conveys the importance of your achievements in a factual way.

Why This Answer Works

This question often comes up when interviewers see the same things mentioned across several resumes. It's possible that the interviewer is at a loss to decide who the better candidate is. If anything, this is your chance to jump in as one of the first candidates and show your best side.

You need to talk about your strengths in such a way that sounds alluring to the interviewer. These strengths might be ones several others have and need not even be unique to you necessarily. However, the way in which you say it must make them say inside "Yes, yes! That's exactly what we want." The given answer does all this.

Question 3

Why do you want this job?

Alternative Wording (Variants):

Why do you want this role/position?
Why did you apply for this job?
What do you look for in a job/in this job?
How do you see this job as a step in your career?
What do you find most attractive about this position?
What do you expect from this new position?
Do you feel you are overqualified for this job?

Why They Ask This Question

The answer is obviously the money, to pay your bills. You can't say that in an interview, now, can you?

The interviewer is trying to understand if you have randomly sent out applications to any open job there is or whether you have applied to this job with enough forethought. Whatever you answer, never mention money or material benefits you get from the job. Instead, highlight how getting such a job will put your knowledge and skills to good use. Mention all the areas or tasks within this job that you'll excel in.

Ideal Answer

I have always wanted a job involving [requirement 1], [requirement 2], and [requirement 3]. These are my favorite types of work to do. This way, I get to exercise many of my skills such as [skill 1], [skill 2], and [skill 3] and

put all my experience to good use. Thus, this job stood out as the ideal opportunity for me.

How to Say It

The way in which you say it should make it look like you're passionate about this job, preferably, without using the word "passion". Show genuine excitement for the work itself rather than the rewards. Also, keep the answer short.

Why This Answer Works

The interviewer wants to know if you'll stay in this job for a long time or leave too soon. If you answer money or other material benefits, it signals that you'll leave once you get a better pay elsewhere. Contrarily, if you answer that you enjoy the job itself, the employer will see it as a positive. This way, they need not worry about keeping you motivated. An already happy employee means more productivity with less maintenance.

The given answer highlights the job requirements, your suitability and your passion for performing on the role all in one go. At the same time, it also removes the focus from you and puts it on the job itself pretty smoothly.

Question 4

Why do you want to work in this company?

Alternative Wording (Variants):

What do you know about this company?
What interests you the most about our company?
How did you end up choosing this company?
Don't you think you might be better suited for a different type of company?
If you could choose any company, where would you go?
I see that you come from a prestigious company like X. Why would you leave your job there and come to work somewhere like here?

Why They Ask This Question

They want to know if you've evaluated their company well just like they're evaluating you. If you've selected this company consciously over others, then you're far more likely to stick to this company after joining. So, you want to demonstrate this in your answer even if the opposite is the case.

Please note that some of the variants above are trap questions. Don't fall for them. The answer is always this company.

Do your due diligent research about this company, namely what they do, which industry they're in, who their competitors are and how they stand out from the competition. Extra points if you can memorize and repeat

the mission statements of the company from their website or brochure. While you're there, you can also read up on some company history.

Again, never mention material benefits given by the organization.

Ideal Answer

I want to work here because I heard nothing but good things about this company. I understand that the company is into such-and-such a business in this particular industry. This organization is a significant player in the market giving a tough competition to other companies like A, B and C. I went through the company website and found that the core values are X, Y and Z. These align well with my personal values in life. I believe this organization supports its employees in many ways and also provides a lot of growth opportunities. I feel my knowledge and skill set will be put to good use here.

(Make sure all your information about the industry and product portfolio is correct. Have one or two confirmed examples ready for how the organization supports its employees or provides opportunities.)

Never Say

Don't ever say you want to work for them because of salary, overtime benefits, lower work duration, promotion, leave policy, medical benefits, reimbursement benefits,

extracurricular activities or even free lunch. This will make you look cheap and selfish.

How to Say It

Say it like you mean it. Say that you want to work in this industry and for a prestigious organization like them. Show that you've actually researched this company especially in terms of what it would be like working here. Mention examples such as training programs, mentorship systems, networking opportunities, research projects, freedom to experiment, awards for best performance, equal and fair treatment of employees, good communication practices etc. You should have confirmed that they do in fact give these opportunities. Mostly, you can find these things in the company website, employer review sites or by interacting with past employees. Don't mention any past or present employee's name during the interview. It's a strict no-no. The only exception to this rule is if that employee has officially recommended you.

Why This Answer Works

The given answer works because by mentioning information about the industry, the company's core activity or products, and company values, you're showing that you have put in your fair share of thought about joining this company. By mentioning actual opportunities, you're giving the impression that you have done your research.

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200+ Variants

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